

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A method to cold-start a fuel cell system ~~at sub-zero temperatures, the fuel cell system~~ having a fuel cell stack upstream of which is connected a heating device to heat a cooling agent to be circulated by a coolant pump, said method comprising ~~the following steps:~~

during a start-up time, at an ambient temperature that is below a temperature at which the fuel cell stack is capable of sustaining a normal operation, operating the fuel cell stack at an output power ~~in such a way that the generated power~~ is adequate to operate the heating device and the coolant pump;

using the power provided by the fuel cell stack to operate the heating device for ~~[[the]]~~ heating ~~[[of]]~~ the cooling agent, as well as the coolant pump; ~~[[and]]~~

circulating the cooling agent between the fuel cell stack and the heating device; and

shutting off the heating device when the fuel cell stack has reached a preset temperature that is higher than the original temperature.

Claim 2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the preset temperature is at least 0 degrees Celsius.

Claim 3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the preset temperature is at least +5 degrees Celsius.

Claim 4. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the fuel cell stack is operated until the preset temperature has been reached, at a capacity that does not exceed 10% of the nominal output power of the fuel cell system.

Claim 5. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, wherein the heating device is a burner.

Claim 6. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein, to operate the burner, power is provided from the fuel cell stack to the auxiliaries necessary for the operation of the burner.

Claim 7. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~any one of claims 5 or 6~~ claim 5, wherein the burner is operated with hydrogen.

Claim 8. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~any one of claims 5 to 7~~ claim 5, wherein ~~one and~~ the same air compressor is used to supply oxygen to the fuel cell stack and to the burner.

Claim 9. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~any one of claims 5 to 8~~ claim 5, wherein the burner is a high-performance gas burner.

Claim 10. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~any one of claims 8 or 9~~ claim 8, wherein ~~[[the]]~~ an air volume provided by the air compressor is divided between the burner and the fuel cell stack, with a ratio of ~~favours~~ favors the burner.

Claim 11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the air volume provided by the air compressor is divided between the burner and the fuel cell stack with a 4:1 ratio.

Claim 12. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~any one of claims 1 to 11~~ claim 1, wherein the fuel cell stack is a solid-polymer-electrolyte fuel cell stack.

Claim 13. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~any one of claims 1 to 12~~ claim 1, wherein the fuel cell system is ~~equipped with~~ includes a starter battery.

Claim 14. (Original) The method of claim 13 wherein the starter battery is dimensioned to supply electrical power to the auxiliaries necessary for the supply of reactants to the fuel cell stack until the fuel cell itself generates electrical power.

Claim 15. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~any one of claims 13 or 14~~ claim 13, wherein:

in a first stage the starter battery initially supplies power to the auxiliaries necessary for the supply of reactants to the fuel cell stack; and
~~wherein this~~

initial power ~~[[feed]]~~ supply is interrupted when the fuel cell stack generates electrical power.